

# Data Collection for the MADCE Longitudinal Offender Survey



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# Overview of Data Collection

- Eligible sample members identified on a rolling basis from participating sites
  - Almost all sites required a “consent for release of information” procedure
    - Loss at this stage impacted response rates and introduces selection bias
  - Sample identification required extensive involvement from UI, RTI, and CCI “court liaisons”



# Overview of Data Collection (cont'd)

- Eligible sample members assigned to RTI field interviewers and approached for participation
  - Mailed lead letters and brochures prior to in-person contact
- Baseline interview conducted up to 6 weeks post program enrollment
- All baseline participants approached for follow-up interviews at 6- and 18-months post-baseline



# Overview of Data Collection (cont'd)

- Interviews done via computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI)
  - All interviews were conducted by trained RTI interviewers
    - The same FI follows the respondent for all waves
- Interviews conducted in respondents' homes, jails, prisons, and treatment facilities
  - Facility access typically negotiated by UI, RTI, and CCI court liaisons



# Overview of Data Collection (cont'd)

- Interviews lasts 1.5 to 2 hours
- Interview content:
  - Demographics, family, supervision status, drug court participation, treatment motivation, violation, sanctions, rewards, substance use, criminal behavior, mental health, treatment and other support services, attitudes and perceptions
  - Many behaviors “calendared”



# Overview of Data Collection (cont'd)

- During the interview, consent is also obtained for retrieving non-public administrative data
- Oral fluid drug test conducted at final interview (for non-incarcerated respondents)
- Developed a PAPI version of instrument for maximum security facilities and NY DOC

# Overview of Data Collection (cont'd)

- Interview compensation structure:
  - Baseline: \$35
  - 6 month f/u: \$40
  - 18 month f/u: \$50
    - Oral fluids swab: \$15
  - Bonus for completing all 3 waves: \$25
  - Bonus for calling ahead to set up interview: \$5



# Overview of Data Collection (cont'd)

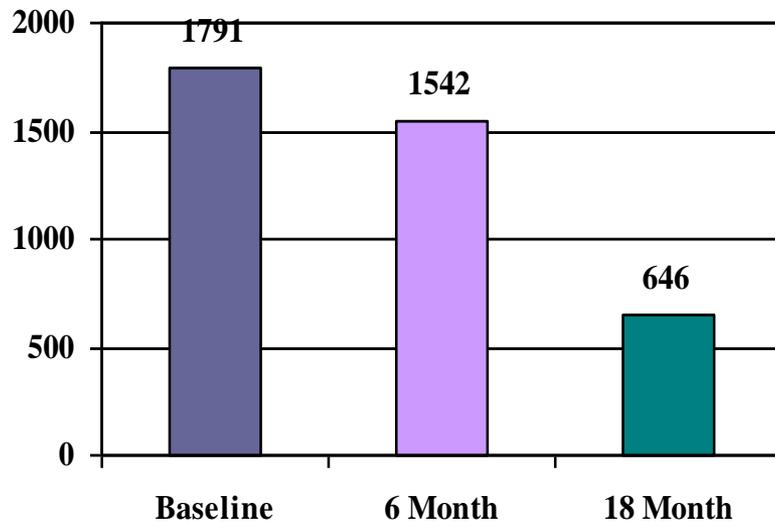
- Mid-wave contact between interviews
- For each interview wave, a random 10% of completed interviews are verified by telephone recontact
  - Designed to detect interview falsification or deviations from study protocols
  - No problems have been identified through verification

# Data Collection Schedule

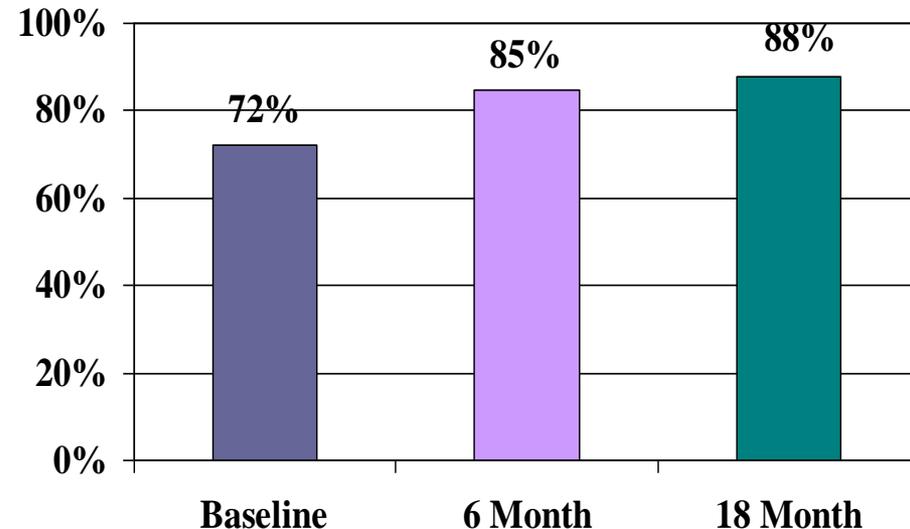
Interview Wave	2005				2006				2007			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Baseline	■	■	■	■	■	■						
6 Month f/u			■	■	■	■	■	■				
18 Month f/u							■	■	■	■	■	■

# Data Collection Status

Sample Sizes by Interview Wave



Response Rates by Interview Wave





# Lessons Learned from Data Collection

- The Obvious: need for a well-designed study & collaborative relationship between courts and evaluation team
- The not-so-obvious:
  - Staffing the “Right” Field Team
  - Training the Field Team
  - Developing Appropriate Study Protocols
  - Effectively Recruiting Respondents
  - Successfully Retaining Respondents



# Staffing the “Right” Field Team

- Importance of hiring professional interviewers that are independent of the criminal justice system
  - FI credibility essential for subject recruitment
  - FI availability and flexibility essential for high response and retention rates
  - FI supervision and performance monitoring essential for data quality



# Training the Field Team

- Importance of FI training on key topics
  - Human subjects protection
  - Dealing with distressed respondents, intoxicated respondents, etc.
  - Interviewing in correctional facilities (FI safety, protecting R's rights, sexual harassment, etc.)
  - Recruitment strategies
  - Tracing/locating techniques



# Developing Appropriate Study Protocols

- Protocols for interviewing in jails/prisons
  - Ensure that access is appropriately negotiated and documented
  - Ensure that details about laptops, incentives, and privacy of interview room are agreed upon
  - Reveal as little as possible about the nature of the study to facility staff
  - Do not reveal R's decision to do the current interview (or behavior during the interview)



# Developing Appropriate Study Protocols (cont'd)

- Protocols/strategies for interviewing in treatment facilities
  - Understand that staff cannot confirm that a respondent is in the facility and use hypotheticals
    - “If [name] is in your facility, could you please pass along this information?”
  - Reveal as little as possible about the nature of the study to facility staff
  - Note that messages are frequently not passed along and showing up in person is essential
  - Try to develop a variety of contacts at the facility and use this to one’s advantage



# Developing Appropriate Study Protocols (cont'd)

- For treatment facilities affiliated with a drug court, try to involve drug court staff in negotiating FI access
  - Best to do this early on in the project
- Take advantage of holidays or temporary leaves, in which the respondent might return home for a few days (allowing for a home interview)
- On the sneaky side:
  - If the FI does get access to the floor, they should jot down the floor phone number so that next time they can call the # directly!



# Developing Appropriate Study Protocols (cont'd)

- Protocols for handling distressed respondents
  - Separate protocols for interviews in correctional facilities and community
  - Threat to self vs. threat to others
- Protocols for witnessing child abuse/neglect
  - Requires familiarity with state mandatory reporting laws



# Effectively Recruiting Participants

- From FI debriefing:
  - emphasize that you are not part of the criminal justice system
  - show respondents that you care about them as individuals
  - be flexible
  - be personable and charming
  - Keep commitments



# Successfully Retaining Participants

- Challenges to locating this population
  - Very transient population
  - Unstable relationships
  - Some traditional tracing resources are not effective
    - Credit bureau data bases
    - Talking to current/former neighbors
    - Talking to family members
- Our mid-wave contact and incentive for the respondent to call us are effective



# Successfully Retaining Participants (cont'd)

- Essential to plan ahead for the next interview
  - Modify traditional question: “Who are 3 people who will always know where you are?”
    - FIs obtain information on people who will know where they are if they are using and people who will know where they are if they are clean
    - For respondents who are fathers, FIs try to always obtain contact information for child’s mother
    - FIs ask respondents to tell the contact people that they will be contacting them and that it is okay to disclose his/her whereabouts to them



# Successfully Retaining Participants (cont'd)

- From one wave to the next, it may be necessary for FIs to (tactfully) press the respondent for new contact people
  - Find out where respondent spends time when he/she is using and when he/she is clean
  - Find out about any other names that the respondent uses



# Successfully Retaining Participants (cont'd)

- Try to develop rapport with family and friends of respondent
  - Families are very important gatekeepers
  - Important to demonstrate persistence and knowledge about the respondent
  - Important for FI to convey that she/he is not a part of criminal justice system
  - Emphasize monetary incentive
  - Charm factor important



# Successfully Retaining Participants (cont'd)

- Use public records
  - Search the court dockets for other court appearances
  - Conduct daily inmate searches in prisons and jails
  - Obtain arrest records (may contain useful information about location of crime, co-defendants, etc.)
  - For R's out on bail, find out who bailed them out
  - Birth certificates are public records that might contain locating information (for new parents)



# Successfully Retaining Participants (cont'd)

- For locating drug court participants, FIs attend regularly scheduled drug court meetings, drug court graduations, and other drug court events
- Some tracing strategies too risky to employ with criminal justice populations:
  - Contacting probation officers or case managers about unlocatable respondents may alert them that the individual is not where he/she is supposed to be, which could trigger a violation



# Summary

- Key lessons that may be useful for other studies
  - Staff the field team professionally (monitor performance, strive for FI continuity)
  - Train effectively
  - Develop appropriate study protocols for the numerous situations that the field team will need to be prepared for
    - Consideration of human subjects protection very important when working with this population
  - Use effective recruitment techniques
  - Employ a variety of effective retention techniques
    - Remember that much of effective locating is dependent on the information obtained by the FI at the previous interview(s), so planning ahead for the next interview essential
    - FI rapport with family, friends, and criminal justice/treatment providers is also key